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The third in a series of stories on housing in South Haven: New police officers and emergency responders often not able to live in South Haven

By James Windell

Both the South Haven Police Department and the South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) have added new employees in the past year. However, not one of them will be able to afford a home in South Haven.

"As housing costs continue to rise, particularly in desirable lakeshore areas, it has become increasingly difficult for new members to live nearby," says Brandon Hinz, Executive Director of SHAES. "Additional support living nearby during times of overload would be optimal, but a public service salary doesn't support high dollar residences."

While it would be desirable for emergency responders and police officers to live in the community where they serve, homes in South Haven are too expensive for young people starting out in careers as civil servants. As has been acknowledged over and over by City of South Haven officials and leaders, there is simply not enough affordable housing – either to rent or buy – for those starting out in careers.

"My new officers that have recently started looking at either renting or owning houses have looked outside of South Haven," says interim South Haven Police Chief Adam DeBoer. "Of my three officers who recently purchased a house, none of them purchased within the City of South Haven."

DeBoer says that one of his newer officers has purchased a home just outside the township and the other two are in other cities within the mileage area for police officers. "All have looked outside of the City for many reasons," DeBoer adds. "Some wanted space in order to do things that would not be possible in the city and some wanted to be closer to family, however, housing prices play a role as well."

Hinz points to the sharp increase in the selling prices of homes in the 49090 Zip Code area. He notes that average selling prices of homes went from $146,000 in 2005 to $361,000 in 2025. That increase represents a 147 % increase in prices of homes.

"Although SHAES salaries have increased significantly," Hinz says, "home values in our area have risen at nearly twice that rate. This widening gap affects both our ability to attract paid-on-call members who must live locally and full-time employees hoping to reside within the community they serve."

Starting salaries for firefighters and paramedics have increased from $32,000 in 2005 to $56,000 a year in 2025. While that is a 75% increase in salary, as indicated above, home prices almost doubled that.

According to DeBoer, the South Haven Police Department does its best to keep two officers in the area as much as possible. "If officers live close by and we need additional help, we call off duty officers in," he says. "The closer they live, the sooner we can have extra help at work. With officers choosing to live further away, it makes call-in response time longer."

DeBoer acknowledges that where an employee lives is not as much of a problem for the police department as it is for SHAES. "We do not rely heavily on call-in support," DeBoer says. "Since our reliance on call-in support is not high, I can't actually remember a situation where an officer lived too far away."

Full-time SHAES employees work a set schedule and are not required to live within SHAES's 97-square-mile coverage area, which includes Casco Township, Geneva Township, South Haven City, and South Haven Township. "Historically, most full-time staff lived locally," says Hinz, "but today only about 55% reside within the district."

SHAES currently employs 32 paid-on-call members, which is consistent with their 20-year average. "These firefighters must live within our coverage area to ensure timely response when additional support is needed," Hinz explains. "Paid-on-call personnel are essential to our operations. While up to five full-time staff respond to initial incidents, it's our paid-on-call members who perform critical firefighting, rescue, and patient care functions during larger events."

Both DeBoer and Hinz say that despite the challenges related to housing both departments are committed to their mission. To provide the highest quality police, fire, rescue, and EMS service to the community – just as they have for nearly a century.

Two outgoing City Council members honored by Mayor's Proclamation

By James Windell

The final time Wendi Onuki will sit in the City Council chamber as a City Council member happened on Monday, December 15, 2025. Joe Reeser's last appearance as a City Council member was on December 1, 2025.

Both were honored by Mayor Annie Brown on December 15 with proclamations that recognized their service on the City Council.

Onuki served four years as a City Council member and chose not to run for a second term in last November's elections. In the proclamation in her honor, Brown said that Councilwoman Onuki has been a visible and engaged presence in the community, bringing a thoughtful and people-centered perspective to her work on the City Council.

Brown's proclamation also stated that she, through both her professional work with children in the community and her role as a parent, "has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to the future of the community and to decisions that consider the long-term well-being of families and residents" and that this perspective "has informed her approach to public service, encouraging discussion and consideration of how City policies and actions impact current and future generations."

Councilman Joe Reeser has served eight years on the council and was similarly honored by the Mayor. The proclamation states that Reeser has demonstrated a strong commitment to public service and "the responsible governance of the City, contributing time, thought, and leadership to the work of the City Council."

Furthermore, the Mayor stated that he, in addition to regular City Council duties, "represented the City through service on various boards and commissions, including the Housing Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, and the South Haven Area Recreation Authority, providing valuable insight and support to the City's advisory bodies."

The proclamation also commended Reeser for approaching his civic responsibilities "with dedication and professionalism, helping to ensure communication and collaboration between City Council and its boards and commissions."

Councilmember Onuki also served as the Council liaison to various boards and commissions, the Parks Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum.

An email from Dan Williamson, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum was read by George Sleeper. It stated that Onuki's experience with youth education,

the Museum's survival, and her belief in one of the Museum's fundamental beliefs – youth education – was appreciated by the Museum Board. Williamson said in the email that "Wendy's inputs have been invaluable for helping us on the Board dramatically increase the number of youth per year that the Museum has touched."

Reeser reflects on his 8 years on South Haven's City Council

By James Windell

When Joe Reeser talks about his eight years as a City Councilman in South Haven, he has plenty of good things to say.

"Probably the best part was helping residents," Reeser said in a recent interview after he had just attended his last City Council meeting. "It's really enjoyable when an issue comes up and a resident gets ahold of you, whether it's about a pothole in their street or their backyard is flooding, if I could get it solved right away, well, that is a really good feeling."

Besides solving problems for South Haven residents, he had positive things to say about the City's staff. "I really appreciate the City staff, especially City Manager Kate Hosier, for always being willing to discuss difficult issues with me, such as short-term rentals. I appreciate Kate hanging in there with me as I would confront her on different issues."

He saves his most effusive comments for the citizens. "I especially enjoyed meeting so many wonderful residents throughout the city," Reeser says. "When you are on the City Council, you talk to people all over the city, not just those in your ward."

Running for mayor in 2022, he had the opportunity to meet many people. "Although I was defeated, the good part, maybe the best thing, was going door-to-door and talking to residents," he recalls. "No other way would I have had the opportunity to talk to literally hundreds of people. I can say this, that without exception, every single time I knocked on a door, people were kind and considerate and spoke candidly with me. A lot of people even invited me into their house to talk. I listened to them tell me why they loved living in South Haven and how they felt we could make it better."

An added benefit of serving on the City Council was the being a representative on other boards and commission. "I've been on the Downtown Development Authority and on the South Haven Area Recreation Authority. These committees helped me understand the city better and allowed me the chance to take an active role in improving the quality of life for everyone."

Reeser also says that there were things that were difficult about being on the council. "Decisions and

changes in city government happen very, very slowly," he says. "This was hard for me to accept. I had my own business for 25 years and I could make decisions the night before to change the direction of the company. With a city, everything moves slowly. There has to be all these checks and balances, which I understand, and I don't necessarily disagree about the need for them, but it is hard to sit there and know that a decision will take many city council meetings to make."

That, he says, was difficult for him to accept. But there's more. "Another thing that is tough in being on City Council is that no matter what your position is on an issue, some people will applaud you and some will be very critical," he explains. "It's understandable, but sometimes my position has been misrepresented or I was insulted."

He adds that he was spared people's negative comments because he doesn't use social media. As a result, he didn't have to read what people were posting. "If I wanted to talk to someone, I'd call them or write to them," he says. "To me, social media is a way for people to hide."

Reeser that he can look back on his eight years and take pride in what he and the South Haven City Council have accomplished. "One of the things I learned was listening to the residents," Reeser says. "On the City Council, you are representing people, and I think I can say that I was guided in making decisions by what the residents wanted."

Also, he made decisions based on what he thought best. "When I was running for City Council, I told people that I was completely independent," he says. "That nobody could buy my votes or influence me. My decisions were my decisions. I'm proud of that."

Many decisions during his tenure related to short-term rentals (STRs). "Being part of the City Council that approved a STR ordinance is also something I'm proud of," he says. "In the last two years we had the ability to make an STR ordinance that was better than when we began to talk about it."

He also feels a sense of satisfaction that he helped push for affordable housing. Reeser says that the Overton project will be finished in the next few years and he feels proud that he helped bring this about. "I also pushed for lifeguards in our city," he says. "Not everyone agrees with this, but I'm proud of pushing for a lifeguard program."

His biggest disappointment as a city councilman?

"My biggest disappointment is that I really thought that I could help improve the economic growth of the City," he says. "The City is still not growing like it should."

As much as he has enjoyed being on the City Council for two full terms, in some ways he is happy to be done. "My wife, Linda, and I can now travel more and we don't have to worry that I have to be in the city for the next City Council meeting."

Although he describes himself as someone who doesn't just sit around, Reeser says he will take the next few months to figure out what he wants to do with his life after bring so involved in South Haven affairs.

He has recently taken up the sport of pickleball and he will continue to play pickleball because he sees it as physically challenging and it affords him the opportunity to interact with other people.

"After as few months, I will figure out what other ways I can contribute to the City," he says. "Whether it is being on boards or volunteering. Whatever is best."

No matter what he decides, he says he is committed to South Haven. But there is a hope he has for the residents of the City.

"I hope people realize by reading this article how important the City Council is for the person who serves on it and for the City," he says. "People should think of city council members as people who not only vote on issues, but also as people that are giving their time and energy – and really are trying their best to do what is best for the City. We all want to do what is best for the city."

Several Van Buren County Sheriff's Office deputies honored by MSP

PAW PAW - On Dec. 9, the Michigan State Police honored several Van Buren County Sheriff's Office deputies with the MSP Professional Excellence Award for their assistance in a missing person case from July 8.

During the incident, an elderly female had wandered into a dense swamp area and became lost, MSP's Aviation Unit located her from the air and guided both MSP troopers and Van Buren Country Sheriff's deputies to her position.

Through a coordinated effort responders were able to reach the victim and bring her to safety. This incident highlights the strong working relationship between MSP and the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office and the teamwork required to get the job done.

Receiving awards from Post Commander Scott Ernstes were Sgt. Richard Rennhack, Sgt. Paul Graham, Deputy Jason Mohney, and K-9 Deputy Devin Krogel.

Sheriff's Report- Stolen vehicle recovered, suspect faces charges

Van Buen County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response set up on a stolen vehicle out of Ionia County being tracked by ONSTAR on Interstate 94 Highway. Sgt. Rennhack had ONSTAR disable the vehicle as it was exiting the highway in a safe location with backup units with him. The suspect was taken into custody without incident. "The suspect had a suspended driver's license and was enroute to Benton Harbor with the stolen vehicle to give a subject a ride home who got out of prison the day prior. The vehicle was impounded for safe return to the victim," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The passenger was not charged with the incident. The driver will be charged for the suspended license out of Van Buren County and the other crimes will be charged out of Ionia.

Uniform Response was making a traffic stop on a truck for no license plate in Lawton. "The driver attempted to flee the deputy, however, after a short pursuit realizing he wasn't getting away, pulled over," said Sheriff Abbott. K-9 Charlie was deployed during the felony stop which deterred the suspect driver from running or fighting with the deputy. The suspect was lodged for flee and elude, possession of methamphetamine, driving while license suspended, and unregistered vehicle.

Uniform Response handled a UDAA/ Missing Endangered Person in Gobles. "The suspect, who suffers from a medical condition, stole his ex-wife's vehicle. He was later located in Lawton with the vehicle. The vehicle was picked up by the victim, and she was not wanting to pursue charges. Disposition was made by assisting the suspect with the help he needed," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled a hit and run car versus pedestrian fatality crash in Hartford Township. An unknown vehicle hit the victim who was in the roadway in the early morning hours and left the scene. A passerby drove up on the victim and started rendering aid until deputies and first responders got on scene. "Unfortunately, the victim could not be saved. Our accident reconstructionist was called in and processed the scene. Anyone with any information is asked to call our office," said Sheriff Abbott.

Corrections deputies fought with an individual who kicked and bit them. A report was sent to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for charges in which charges were authorized for the assault against prison employee. "Thank you once again to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for having our back and holding people accountable who think they can just assault our staff with no consequences," said Sheriff Abbott.

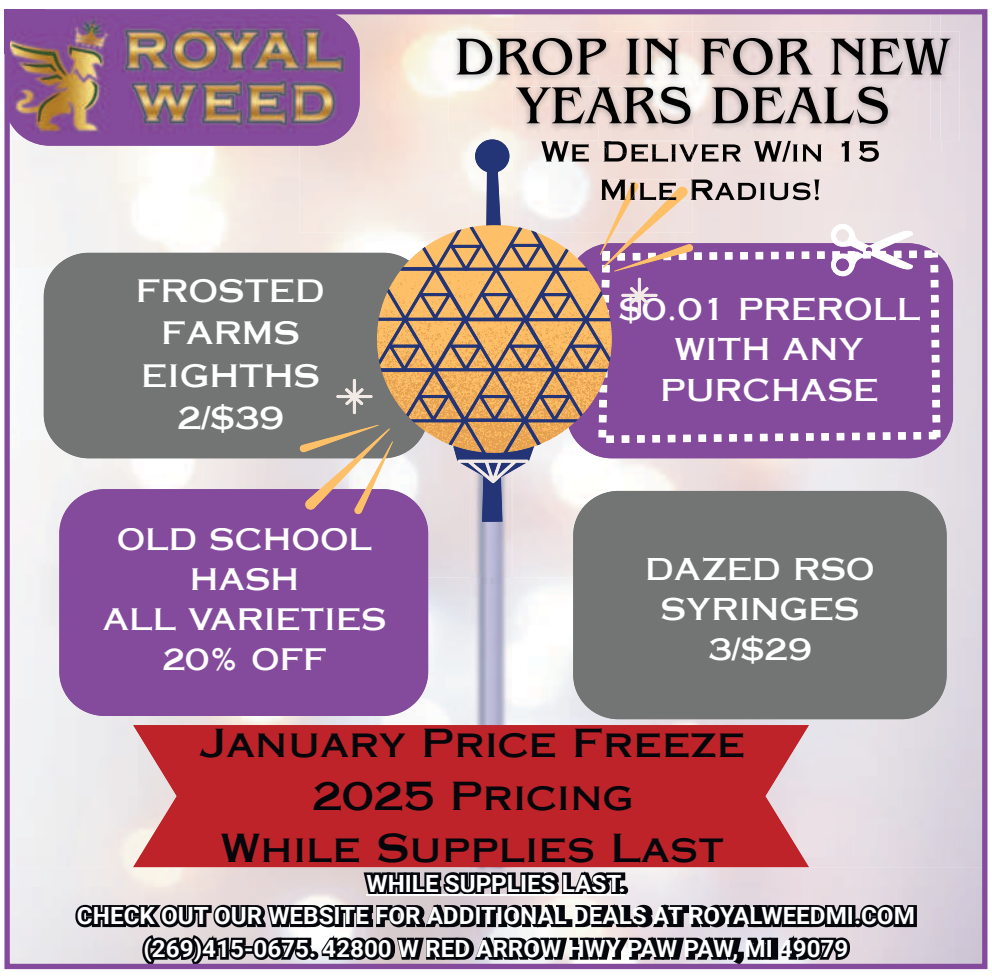
"I am excited to announce that three days after announcing our Pets for Patriots Program, our first dog was adopted. Lucky, who suffered from a bullet wound, was the chosen one. Lucky came in with a pass-through wound with nothing vital being hit. After being treated by the vet and getting up to speed health wise after a few weeks, Lucky found a forever home," said Sheriff Abbott.

Paw Paw Community Chorus to begin practice for Spring Concert

PAW PAW - The Paw Paw Community Chorus will begin practice on Jan. 5, 2026, at 7 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, located on the corner of Kalamazoo and Pine streets in Paw Paw, in preparation for their 25th Annual Spring Concert which will be presented on Sunday, May 3, 2026, 4 p.m., at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church,420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. The chorus, under the direction of Theresa Vaughn, will be accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek.

The following selections will be presented by the chorus: "A Stephen Foster Medley"/ arr. by Jon Washburn, "Cross the Wide Missouri (Shenandoah/The Water is Wide)" / adapted and arranged by Don Besig and Nancy Price, "Thankful" by Carole Bayer Sager, David Foster and Richard Page/arr.by Mark Hayes, "Wade in the Water"/arr. by Mark Hayes, "Bring Us Hope" by Ruth Elaine Schram, "The Impossible Dream" by Joe Darion and Mitch Leigh/arr. by Mark Hayes, "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen/arr. by Roger Emerson, "Joshua (Fit the Battle of Jericho)"/ American Spiritual/ arr. by Kirby Shaw, and "What the World Needs Now" by Hal David and Burt Bacharach/arr. by Kirby Shaw.

The chorus welcomes all singers from the Southwest Michigan area to join in this endeavor. For more information, contact Joy Martin at (231) 577-9334, Bruce Safbom at (630) 817-0100, or Theresa Vaughn at (269) 668-4631.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2ND FRONT PAGE

South Haven Performance Series announces its 2026 season

Cavatina Duo

Elliot Wuu

By James Windell

If you love classical music, then you need to put the dates for the 2026 South Haven Performance Series on your calendar.

South Haven Performance Series Board President Robert Linstrom says that the 2026 season will continue a tradition of bringing exemplary talent in classical music concerts to our community. "The 2026 concert series will be exciting for concert goers as they encounter a diverse group of remarkable artists," Linstrom said.

"The new season kicks off with Gilmore Piano Festival young artist and Juilliard graduate Elliot Wuu for a solo piano concert on May 9, 2026," Linstrom said. "Wuu has garnered top prizes in international competitions, including the Hilton Head International Piano Competition and the Yamaha and Bösendorfer USASU International Piano Competition. Most recently, he is a laureate of the 2025 American Pianists Awards."

Following this first concert of the new season on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at 7:00 pm at Peace Lutheran Church, South Haven, the second concert will feature the Lincoln Trio on Friday, June 26, at 7:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church, South Haven.

Based in Chicago, the Lincoln Trio is made up of three internationally recognized musicians playing piano, violin and cello. The trio, nominated for a 2017 Grammy Award for Best Performance by a Small Ensemble and a 2024 Latin Grammy, were winners of the 2008 Masterplayers International Competition in Venice.

On Friday, July 24 at 7:00 pm at Peace Lutheran Church, Artistic Director Dr. Christopher Mason leads Vox GR, an ensemble which has become the premier professional choral ensemble in West Michigan. Vox GR will perform a wide repertoire of choral music stretching across all eras from composers of diverse backgrounds.

The Cavatina Duo, with Eugenia Moliner, flute, and Denis Azabagic, guitar, comes to the First United Methodist Church on Friday, August 28 at 7:00 pm for a concert.

The electrifying performances of the Cavatina Duo have captivated audiences worldwide in such major venues and festivals as Ravinia in Chicago, Da Camera Society in Los Angeles, Aix-en-Provence Summer Festival in France), and the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing.

Then, on Friday, September 18 at 7:00 pm, The Bayberry String Quartet will give a concert at Peace Lutheran Church.

"Most years we have sponsored four or five concerts for our community," Linstrom said. "The six-concert series in 2026 will include our first collaboration with the South Haven Public Schools, offering a September evening concert by the Bayberry String Quartet preceded by the ensemble spending the afternoon providing workshops and performances at South Haven High School. The South Haven Performance Series Board of Directors has committed to growing our collaboration with our own community's young artists in the public schools."

The Bayberry String Quartet is recognized for its dynamic performances and fresh interpretations of chamber music compositions. Since education is a cornerstone of The Bayberry String Quartet's mission to engage with people of all ages and backgrounds, which is why they will do the afternoon workshop with students.

Rounding out the 2026 season will be a return of Vox GR Choral Ensemble for their traditional holiday concert on Sunday, December 20 at 4:00 pm at Peace Lutheran Church.

"Because of the generous support of individual donors, businesses and community organizations," Linstrom said, "we will continue to offer the concerts for a very modest price of $15 for adults with free admission for students. The South Haven Performance Series seeks to bring world class talent to our community and keep the cost affordable to hear these gifted artists."

Admission to the December concert is free as a holiday gift to the community. Students are always admitted free. Tickets are cash at the door on the day of the concert.

For more information, visit the South Haven Performance Series website at https://southhavenperformanceseries.org

Bronson BirthPlace reveals most popular baby names of 2025

Theodore and Violet Top Bronson's Baby Name List

Bronson welcomed more than 4,500 newborns in 2025, bringing with them a fresh list of the year's most popular baby names. Known as the leading birthing provider in southwest Michigan, Bronson BirthPlace provides families a safe, family-centered environment for one of life's most important moments at its locations in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek.

Top Boy Names of 2025
1. Theodore
2. Henry
3. Noah
4. Hudson
5. James
6. Wesley
7. Grayson
8. Oliver
9. William
10. Lincoln

Top Girl Names of 2025
1. Violet
2. Olivia
3. Evelyn
4. Lainey
5. Harper
6. Emma
7. Sophia
8. Mia
9. Paisley
10. Zoey

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South Haven Zoning Board of Appeals denies request for variance for STR

By James Windell

The Zoning Board of Appeals regretfully turned down a request for a variance at the Monday, December 22, 2025 meeting.

Owners of the property located at 111 Woodman, South Haven, requested that they be granted a variance from the Short-Term Rental Ordinance so they could register as a short-term rental (STR).

Since 111 Woodman is within the overlay district which is approved for STRs, and since the property had previously been registered as an STR, it seemed on the face of the request to be a simple matter of granting the needed variance.

However, in reviewing the application, the ZBA found that the request was more complicated than it appeared.

The recent history of the property showed that the owners wanted to live in the house in recent years. That, along with the COVID-19 pandemic led to the owners allowing their STR registration to lapse. Now, they came before the ZBA to say they decided that they wanted their 7-bedroom house to become an STR once again.

However, as noted in their request, the home has no garage or driveway, which is not particularly unusual in some parts of the City of South Haven. Residents and visitors to the 111 Woodman property would have to find on-street parking.

A complicating factor is that since this property was last operating as an STR, the City of South Haven passed a new STR zoning ordinance. The new ordinance states that two parking spaces are required for each dwelling unit with three or less bedrooms. For single family residences with four or more bedrooms, one additional space is required for each additional bedroom. In order to go before the Planning Commission and request a special land use permit for the property, they had to obtain a variance from the STR Ordinance section 2203.06, which establishes the requirements for on-site parking.

Although the ZBA held a public hearing on the matter and no one showed up to challenge the request for a variance, the members of the ZBA had a lengthy discussion centering around the lack of on-site parking.

Some ZBA members noted that if the owners had not let their STR registration lapse, the parking problem would likely not be an issue. "However, parking is a problem in this district," one ZBA member pointed out. "One of the biggest complaints regarding STRs is parking," ABA member Don Bemis said, "and not just for renters but people who come to visit them. And they use spaces that would otherwise be available for public parking." Allowing the variance, he suggested, so the property could become an STR again would only contribute to the parking woes in this area of the city.

Pointing out that parking is always at a premium during the summer season, the ZBA members agreed that the lack of parking at 111 Woodman should be a disqualifying factor for a variance. By a unanimous vote, the ZBA rejected the request for the variance.

In comments after the vote, more than one member indicated they were sorry they had to deny the request.

ZBA member Amy Nichols expressed regret by commenting, "I hate what we had to do here tonight," she said. "It truly bothers me that we had to [deny the request], but we are stuck with the eight things we have to abide by and there's no wiggle room."

Beloved fire chief, former sheriff dies tragically

By Gari Voss

The call began as a medical incident on M-40 near 136th Avenue in Heath Township in Allegan County at about 6pm on Tuesday, December 23, 2025, but in an instant, everything went wrong when the announcement came that there had been a car/pedestrian incident.

Hamilton Fire Chief David Haverdink had responded to the medical call. In the process of assisting the person in crisis, Haverdink was struck by a passing vehicle. He was immediately transported to University of Michigan Health West in Wyoming but succumbed to his injuries on December 25, 2025.

In his 74 years, Haverdink had been a member of the Hamilton Department for 51 years. During that time, he took time from 1993-2000 to serve as the sheriff of Allegan County then served as the Hamilton Fire Chief for more than 40 years.

Responses to the incident gave Haverdink resounding high marks for respect.

Sgt. Kyle Baker with the Allegan County Sheriff's Office shared, "Chief Haverdink is widely respected throughout all of West Michigan, serving on numerous boards and organizations, and providing outstanding service to citizens throughout the Hamilton Fire Department's coverage area."

"Dave was a great person and a highly respected leader in public service whose impact was felt throughout Southwest Michigan," stated South Haven Area Emergency Chief Brandon Hinz.

Martin Township Fire & Rescue concurred, "Chief Haverdink served the citizens of Hamilton and surrounding areas faithfully for over 50 years. His leadership and legacy were felt countywide, and we wish all our extended family at Hamilton Fire and Chief's immediate family strength and peace as they navigate this very difficult time."

This respect grew because of Haverdink's responses to and interactions with those he served. "This man was a good cop," explained Faron Frazee of Allegan. "Way back in 1996, I was in a head on collision on A37. A woman was passing in a no passing zone, and I was miraculously unharmed. I was pregnant at the time, very shaken and in shock. He took the time to get me water, and he waited with me until my husband came to pick me up. He checked up on me a week later. I'm very sorry for your loss, and I thank you for sharing him with us."

Sandy Rasche-Borden wrote her heart-felt thoughts, "We thank you for your loyalty and dedicated service to your community. With honor and respect you will be remembered always and missed dearly. Sending prayers and gentle hugs to your family, friends and community."

Though the current incident was not attributed to alcohol or speed, there are still details that are unclear. Many have expressed anger toward not only the driver in this situation, but all those who refuse to slow down and move over when approaching flashing lights beside thoroughfares. Haverdink was the 36th emergency response person struck when working a scene in 2025.

Michigan's Move Over Law states that it is necessary to "slow down and move over for stationary authorized vehicles with flashing, rotating, or oscillating lights activated."

Hamilton Fire Department Chief Dave Haverdink passed on Thurs., Dec. 25, 2025, from injuries he suffered on Tues., Dec. 23rd when he answered a call to assist in a medical emergency on M-40 near 136th Ave. in Heath Township. Photo courtesy of Hamilton Fire Department.

Emergency response officers, tow-truck drivers, construction workers, good Samaritans, and more have been struck by drivers who are not paying attention. Drivers get distracted. Grand Rapids Fire Department Battalion Chief Richard Clark reflected on stops made by his crews. "[Drivers] want to see what's going on ... so they're not looking, and we could be coming out from behind something, or they do not see that there are accidents on both sides of the highway. Or sometimes, we're not quite in position yet if the accident just happened in front of them. And we get close calls every day. Tragedies happen less often, thank God, but the close calls happen all the time. We just ask that drivers show respect by slowing down to prevent accidents."

In 51 years of answering all types of calls, Haverdink dealt with more tragedy than he would have liked to share. In the same voice, he answered those calls and cared.

Sgt. Kyle Baker with the Allegan County Sheriff's Office said. "The family and the Hamilton Fire Department request peace, privacy, and prayer as they work through this deeply troubling time."

Funeral services for the chief will be held at Central Wesleyan Church, 446 W. 40th St., Holland on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, starting at 1 p.m. Visitation will be on Monday, January 5, 2026, from 3 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Central Wesleyan Church.

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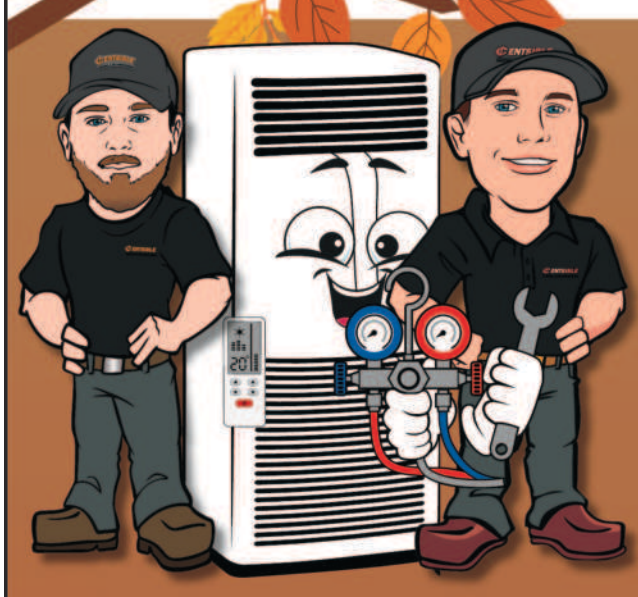

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Gobles cheerleaders off to strong start

Gobles cheerleaders are having a strong season.

By John Raffel

GOBLES — At the Annual Cheer Bash, the middle school competitive cheer team closed out its season in an unforgettable way, earning their highest scores of the year and finishing with a well-deserved victory.

"This accomplishment is a true reflection of the hard work, dedication, and perseverance the athletes showed all season long," coach Sarah Ashbrook said. "This talented group continued to push themselves at every practice and competition, growing stronger and more confident each week. Their determination and teamwork paid off as they finished the season stronger than ever.

"We also say a bittersweet goodbye to our amazing 8th graders, who competed for the very last time as middle school cheerleaders. Their leadership, commitment, and passion helped shape this team and set the standard for those who will follow. They leave behind a legacy of hard work and heart that will not be forgotten. Congratulations to the entire team on an outstanding season.

Ashbrook said the high school competitive cheer team is off to a strong start to the season.

"This young group of athletes, many of whom are new to the sport, has been putting in countless hours of hard work and dedication at practice," she said. "Their efforts quickly paid off in competition. At their first meet of the season, the team earned an impressive second-place finish. They continued to build momentum at the annual home Cheer Bash, where they finished strong in third place, narrowly missing second by just 4.7 points.

"This team's determination, positive attitude, and commitment to improvement are evident each time they take the floor. As they continue to grow in skill and confidence, the future looks bright. We are excited to see how this team continues to develop and where this season will take them. We are thankful for amazing hard working athletes the support of the parents, administration, and the community."

The staff consists of Coach Sarah Ashbrook, Coach Charlee Carrillo and assistant coaches Lillianne and Savannah Ashbrook.

South Haven swimmer excels at Aquinas College

Elena Cavadas South Haven is now a swimmer at Aquinas College.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Elena Cavadas has had a strong first season for Aquinas College in making the transition as a high school swimmer from South Haven.

She graduated in 2025 from South Haven.

She was in high school swimming four seasons and has been in club for 13 years.

Highlights for Cavadas at South Haven included all-conference for four seasons in multiple events. She had five total state qualifications throughout her career. Cavadas also received an All-American academic swimmer award.

The breaststroke has been her best event.

Cavadas was seeded 17th for the 100 breaststroke as a South Haven senior.

She said the coaches were a big part of her decision to go to Aquinas.

"It was closer to home and the team atmosphere was really inviting," Cavadas said. "We use the East Grand Rapids High School pool."

The swim season is from September through February. High school season is in the fall.

In college, it's a long season but I enjoy it better," Cavadas said. "It's going really good. My coaches are amazing. They know what's best for me and my strokes. I have dropped so much time. I have three school stroke records just into a couple of months being there.

Aquinas' media relations department reported that in a meet at Elkhart, Ind., during the fall Emersyn Joslin, Elena Cavadas, Amelia Edens, and Hannah Brown crushed the school record in the 400 medley relay, finishing in 4:04.21. Joslin's lead-off 100 backstroke leg (58.62) was the second-fastest in school history and ranks fourth nationally.

Cavadas said she also has the school record for the 200 breast and 400 breaststroke.

"I feel I've exceeded a lot of people's expectations," Cavadas said. "I'd like to qualify for nationals and our team is trying to win conference this year. We have a talented team this year and a bunch of new underclassmen who are really bringing it to the table. So I think we should be really good."

To be an effective breaststroker, the key, Cavadas said, "is just ignore the pain. Overall I look back at my freshman year in high school. I didn't think I could swim college. Now look where I am. I take everyday like you're here for a reason. Why not work harder. What do you have to lose at this point?"

Cavadas said she uses South Haven's pool when she gets a chance. Cavadas said she also played tennis at South Haven/

At Aquinas, Cavadas is an art major with a business minor.

Gobles standout recalls her senior season

Erica Barber was a basketball and softball standout at Gobles.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Erica Barber was a Gobles basketball and softball player who graduated in 2025 and enjoyed a solid year in sports.

Barber is now attending Grand Valley State University with a focus on academics.

Barber was at Gobles three varsity seasons in softball.

The 2025 season "went pretty well," Barber said. "We had two girls who are now seniors who also played travel ball and they were really good as pitcher, catchers and hitters. We had some struggles at the beginning but at the end we played together and it turned out pretty good.

"One of our goals was to make less errors in a game and we definitely did that. We wanted to get more hitting out of the bottom of the lineup and toward the end of the season that started happening."

Barber pitched and played first and third base. As a pitcher, "I only had a fastball and a little bit of a changeup," he said. "I didn't start pitching until later in the year. I pitched going into travel and then I had to stop. The past few years in high school, I pitched a little when needed.

"I came in relief in our district final game and pitched pretty good there."

Third base was probably her best defensive spot.

Offensively, she batted over .500 and had some home runs. She earned all-conference, all-district and all-regional honors. She also got those honors as a sophomore but had injuries during her sophomore season.'

She had a home run early in the year which Barber said was a confidence booster.

Barber also had a four-year varsity carer in basketball and was all-conference as a sophomore. Her injury, a stress fracture in her right foot, prevented her from doing much in basketball. She had two surgeries related to the injury.

"I will miss my teammates and my coach," Barber said. 'I'll miss being around her a lot."

Bangor senior played various positions

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Terrance Payne was a senior Bangor football who said "you name it I play it."

He was an extremely versatile athlete.

Payne saw action at tight end and safety. He was also the team's kicker and long snapper.

Payne indicated tight end or running back was his most proficient position. He was honorable mention all—linebacker his sophomore year and was first team all-conference running back last year;"

Payne transferred from Bloomingdale to Bangor.

"I remember improving a lot over the year," Payne said. "My freshman year, I was not the best athlete. I was short. Through my junior year I became taller and more athletic."

Payne said he was able to fit into Bangor's system nicely.

"I've been one of their big guys helping all-around, trying to fill in spots that needed to be filled," Payne said.

He will always have fond memories of Bangor's season opener in 8-player football. Bangor won 50-0 over Battle Creek St Phillip.

"It went fantastic," Payne said. "We went in as underdogs and came out with a win. Our team has unlimited potential."

Payne indicated tight end was his best spot. "I'm a very well-rounded tight end, I would like to think. I'm not the biggest or the best at blocking or catching. But I am decent at everything I do there," Payne said.

He felt middle linebacker was his second best position.

"I can read plays fast and can usually make the right decision," Payne said.

He also plays basketball and baseball and feels football is his best sport.

South Haven sophomore has bright future

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Lyne Badenhorst enjoyed a strong sophomore season for South Haven golf and is looking forward to two more years with the Rams.

She shot a 107 in the regionals for 35th place, This was her second season as a varsity golfer. She recalls 2024 "was a pretty good year for my first year."

Badenhorst averaged around 108 as a freshman. This season she usually was around 100.

The improvement came from "gaining more confidence in my swing and improving the little tiny mistakes," she said.

Badenhorst's lowest round was a 98.

"Most of my game was pretty good that day," she said.

Highlights for the team included being division champs and placing second in the conference.

Badenhorst said her putting and tee shots were the best part of her game.

"We'e losing four or five seniors this year,' she said. "We'll have to create a whole new team and build on that."

Badenhorst plays basketball in the winter and dance year round.

"I love to play golf with my dad," Badenhorst said. "I think I'll play a lot with him (during the off season)."

South Haven girls get two more wins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Coach Joey Weaver's South Haven girls basketball team entered the holiday break with pair of home wins, to improve their record to 3-2.

It was 57-40 over Holland Black River and 49-14 over Fennville.

Ly'Nique Cunningham had 35 points, 11 rebounds, four assists and four steals for South Haven. She was 52 percent overall from the field. Charlotte Grzybowski had five points, five rebounds and four assists.

Olivia Weaver had six points on two 3-pointers. Madi Duda had eight points and four rebounds. Nevaeh Cooper and Brennen Fields combined for 11 rebounds and seven steals. Ashlynn Covey had three points.

Against Fennvillke, Cunningham had 23 point, Madi Duda had 11 points, Brennen Fields

had 11 points. Nevaeh Cooper and Reagan Hahn each added two points.

"Overall it was a team defensive effort," Weaver said.

South Haven plays at the Bangor Holiday shootout on Dec. 29 and will host Climax-Scotts on Jan. 6.

In the season opener at Lawton, South took the lead with a few minutes to go, and couldn't quite close it out lost 50-45. South Haven shot 23 percent from the field as a team.

South Haven won the rebound battle 30-21. Ly'Nique Cunningham had 22 points. JaNiyah Langston had 10 point and eight rebounds but went out with an injury. Nevaeh Cooper had four points and seven rebounds. Charlotte Grzybowski, Olivia Weaver, and Brennen Fields each added three points.

At Coloma, South Haven won 57-12. Cunningham had 28 points, Weaver 8, and Grzybowski, Cooper, Covey and Fields each had five.

At the Michiana shootout, South lost 37-64 to Culver Military Academy.

"We were down three starters unfortunately due to injuries," Weaver said. "The shorthanded effort was strong, but not enough to keep up with the loaded boarding school talent. Cunningham led all scorers with 28 points. She also held D-1 prospect Laine Lyles to nine points. Nevaeh Cooper had six points and 17 rebounds.

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South Haven alum recalls volleyball glory years

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — South Haven celebrated its 50th anniversary volleyball this season, and it was a special time for former players such as Alyssia Hanny

She graduated from South Haven in 1992 and played volleyball all four seasons. Her senior season was 1991-92 and volleyball was a winter sport back then. She also played in the middle school.

Hanny was a middle blocker for South Haven.

"My junior year, we made it to the quarterfinals at the state finals," Hanny said. "We lost to Comstock who at that time was in our conference, the Wolverine Conference. They were always a challenge. They knocked us out. But we went far that year. It's the biggest highlight I can remember."

Hanny was an all-stater and played college volleyball at the Division I level at the University of Pittsburgh where she played four years. She started all four seasons and was graduate assistant her fifth year as she went for her master's degree.

As a hitter, Hanny stood 5 feet 4 inches and could slam the ball to the floor very hard.

"I quickly found when I got to college I was a short middle hitter," she said. "I was pretty short for my position, but I could jump pretty high. I was a quick hitter. I liked to hit those quick balls out of the middle. I did wind up having to have knee surgery twice during my college years. That kind off makes things slower. But I was good at those quick hits in the middle."

Hanny also played basketball for three years at South Haven.

"I did it mainly to keep in shape," she said "I had fun because I played with my friends."

Hanny moved back to the South Haven area with her family. She coaches middle school volleyball and later coached freshmen and JVs, Her daughter wound up playing volleyball at Lake Michigan College.

Hanny enjoyed the 50th anniversary.

"I have great memories of that program," she said. "Dene Hadden is the father of program, in my eyes. He is a great person and did a lot not just for South Haven schools volleyball but throughout the state."

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VIEWPOINT

When Silence Walks Louder Than Shouting

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

In a world addicted to outrage, the most radical protest I've seen lately involved no slogans, no megaphones, and no demands shouted into the air. It was a line of Buddhist monks walking.

I first noticed this on Facebook. The monks were walking through West Point, Georgia, where I lived for several years. The streets were lined with thousands of people cheering the monks on as they continued their 2300-mile trek across America.

The monks walking for peace are a group of Theravada Buddhist monks from the Huong Dao Vipassana Bhavana Center in Fort Worth, Texas. In late 2025, they set out on a 2,300-mile Peace Walk from Texas to Washington, D.C., moving city to city across the United States on foot. Their aim is simple and audacious at once: to spread messages of peace, unity, healing, and compassion in a country that often seems allergic to all four.

They walk at the pace of the human body, not the news cycle. There are no barricades, no rallies staged for cameras. Just shaved heads, simple robes, and steady steps along American roads built for speed, not reflection.

Led by Venerable Bhikku Pannakara, also known as Thich Tuệ Nhân, the monks are joined by an unlikely companion, a rescue dog named Aloka, whose quiet presence only deepens the sense of gentleness surrounding the journey. They rely entirely on goodwill for sustenance, following monastic traditions that include eating one meal a day and sleeping outdoors. This is not performance. It is practice.

The walk has not blocked traffic or trended for long. There are no fiery speeches or clenched fists. Instead, there is silence, measured movement, and the discipline of putting one foot in front of the other. In an age that rewards volume, this kind of presence feels almost subversive.

That is precisely why it matters.

The monks are not naïve about the country they are walking through. They pass through a nation fractured by politics, shaped by gun violence, economic anxiety, and cultural exhaustion. Their silence is not an escape from reality. It is a refusal to meet chaos on its own terms.

Modern protest often mirrors the anger it opposes. We shout at those who shout. We dehumanize those we accuse of dehumanization. Somewhere along the way, the goal of peace gets lost in the performance of being right. The monks' walk offers a different proposition: that peace begins not with victory, but with discipline.

There is something unsettling about watching people who are not trying to persuade you, recruit you, or defeat an opponent. As they move mile after mile toward Washington, the monks do not ask for agreement or allegiance. They do not explain themselves in sound bites. They embody the values they are advocating. Compassion. Restraint. Inner calm. Qualities that feel increasingly out of place in public life.

Critics may dismiss the walk as symbolic, even ineffective. Symbols, after all, do not change policy or stop bullets. But this criticism misses the point. The monks are not offering legislation. They are issuing a moral challenge.

The challenge is this: if peace is something we claim to want, why do we practice everything but?

We consume outrage like entertainment. We reward cruelty with clicks. We treat disagreement as a threat rather than a fact of living among other humans. Then we act surprised when conflict escalates. The monks' walk, unfolding across 2,300 miles of American pavement, holds up a mirror and asks us to look at our own posture. Not our opinions, but our way of being.

Walking is slow. It forces presence. You cannot multitask your way across a continent. You feel the heat of the road, the strain in your legs, the uncertainty of what lies ahead. In that sense, the walk itself is the message. Peace cannot be rushed. It cannot be optimized. It requires resilience.

There is also humility in walking. You are exposed to weather, to strangers, to discomfort. You pass through communities without claiming them. You leave no debris behind. Compare that with the scorched-earth tone of much of our political and cultural discourse, and the contrast becomes hard to ignore.

The monks do not pretend their journey will end wars or heal a divided nation overnight. They understand that peace is not a switch to be flipped but a practice to be repeated, often without applause. Their faith lies in accumulation. One step. Then another. One mile. Then the next.

The monks' Peace Walk does not demand our attention as it passes through American cities. It invites our reflection. And perhaps that is the most unsettling part of all. Without shouting at us, it asks a quiet question we cannot easily ignore: if peace looks like this, why are we so reluctant to try it ourselves?

Sometimes the loudest statement is made by those who refuse to raise their voices and keep walking anyway.

Life as Performance Art

G CORWIN STOPPEL

In the 1950 movie "Harvey" Jimmy Stewart plays Elwood P. Dowd, a certifiable eccentric befriended by 6-foot invisible rabbit named Harvey.

It's a light comedy, but at one point Dowd says something meaningful: that in order to be liked, one had to be "Oh, so nice or oh, so wealthy."

On the whole, being liked is a good thing. It comes with advantages such as having a permanent seat at the Cool Kids Table in the cafeteria, being elected president of things, name recognition and so on. Being liked is sometimes deemed more important that good looks for moving forward in life.

In today's culture, those who resort heavily to social media or seek to make their fame and fortune as an "influencer" work hard to accumulate "likes" on their posts. The more likes the more status.

Enough thumbs up and heart icons can lead to more followers. For those who make their living off the internet, more followers mean more advertising revenue. At its finest, it means retiring decades early.

Of course there is a saturation point for all these influencers. It is a rough life, always having to create something new that others will consume. Every creative endeavor is risky because it could fail and bring down the influencer.

The competition is greater because trends and popularity constantly pivot. One change in our culture and the crowd turns against an influencer. It is game over and they are has-beens that lead people to ask, "Who?" It's like the Old West where there is always a new kid with a faster gun.

Even for those who are not trying to get rich via social influencing, there is something addictive about their number of followers and likes. It is competitive, sometimes with a scoop shovel full of smugness: "Oh, I have more followers than you and many more likes." Instantly, they feel like a superior person.

That sort of addiction to risk and success promotes release of dopamine, that feel-good chemical in our brain that shopaholics get after a spending spree, drug

The far greater danger is when someone is so addicted to being liked they will do almost anything to get the next hit. People so desperate to be liked are sometimes willing to trade it for their self-respect. They are willing to sell their souls in return for a short-lasting hit of dopamine.

We can cut corners. It doesn't matter our age or profession. It doesn't take great brains to do it because we can always figure out a method.

Years ago, when I was teaching college history, we talked about academic honesty. In short, no plagiarism. Wikipedia was becoming increasingly popular, and it was a shortcut for students who didn't want to put in the hard work. They could lift out whole paragraphs, change a few words and pass it off as their own.

One of my students apparently did not get the memo on honesty. I caught him when he wrote a term paper that was well out of his league. I asked if he had used Wiki and he was firm he didn't cheat. "My sister did my homework for me," he explained.

If they didn't get caught they got good grades. But ultimately, how would you like to entrust your life to a lawyer or surgeon who cheated his or her way through school, passed their exams and got into their profession? Sooner or later, they will be found out and people will lose respect for them.

Today, it is even easier because of AI, Chat GPT and a host of other programs. Like all clergy, I face that challenge every week. Do I do the study and preparation for the Sunday message, or spend a few minutes and let AI do it for me? Every newspaper writer and editor faces the same challenge.

When we take these shortcuts in life, regardless of the project we are doing or our profession, we lose a bit of our self-respect. We might buffalo others, but we know the truth. As a result, we will forever be looking over our shoulder to see if someone has caught on to us.

Even if we get away with it for years, we know we were a 14-carat fake. Our self-respect is gone. We'll see it every time we look in a mirror. That is no way to live, and we know it.

The British have an interesting phrase they use to say goodbye to someone important to them: "Mind how you go." It is more than drive safely, be careful out there or some other phrase.

This is a reminder about making moral and legal choices, and be certain to make the right ones. Your reputation depends on it.

How Many Meetings Does a Reporter attend in a Year?

By James Windell

I just did a quick calculation and discovered in 2025 that I attended 112 meetings, went to 76 events, such as musical concerts, plays, ribbon cuttings, lectures, school board meetings, public engagement sessions, and parades, and, of course, conducted dozens of interviews and had myriad conversations with people related to stories I was writing.

That's the price you pay for being a small-town newspaper reporter.

Or, as one man said to me as we saw each other at a meeting for the third time in one week: "I see you more than I see my wife."

It's not exactly what I expected when I received a "Welcome to the Beacon" from publisher Mike Wilcox the day he hired me to cover South Haven for his newspaper.

We had moved to South Haven in the summer of 2024 because my wife Jane had taken a job as a member of the Early On Program with the Van Buren Intermediate School District. She expected that this would be her final career move and that coming to the west side of the state would be a welcome change for both of us.

Before leaving Oakland County on the east side of Michigan, I had been on the criminal justice faculty at Wayne State University for 25 years and was part of the criminal justice program at Oakland University for 10 years. I expected I would find a teaching job somewhere at one of the colleges on this side of Michigan.

So, arriving here and finding a house in South Haven, Jane went to work for the VBISD and I pondered the idea of continuing my teaching career.

But then, as is usual, life throws you an unexpected curve ball. Three months after moving to our new city, Jane saw an ad in the South Haven Beacon for a reporter.

"You ought to apply for the job," she said.

I wrinkled my face, gave her a discouraging frown, and went back to reading my book.

But that night I thought about it. I recalled that I started my writing career in my early 30s by doing a weekly parenting column for the Clarkston News in Oakland County, Michigan. After a few years, wanting more as a writer, I got a job as the jazz critic at the Oakland Press, a 50,000-subscriber daily paper. But not satisfied just writing about jazz, I started writing other news and entertainment features along with longer Sunday Magazine pieces. In the mid-1980s, a managing editor at the Oakland Press offered me a weekly parenting column called Coping with Kids. I ended up doing that for 30 years – along with writing occasional pieces for the Detroit Free Press and Detroit News.

But in all those years, I only got one story on the front page of a newspaper. That was a satirical piece on making mouth sounds that would intimidate the cat at our house.

As the correspondent covering everything South Haven during this past year, I've written over 325 stories and rarely a week goes by that I don't have one or more stories on page one – and usually above the fold at that. This is the newspaper writer's equivalent of scoring the winning touchdown.

But, as I now look back at 2025, my first full year as a reporter for the Beacon, I have to admit that when Mike Wilcox hired me on that day way back in 2024, I never expected that:

- I would attend a Planning Commission meeting;
- I would actually write about site plans, special use permits, planned unit developments and variances;
- I would write umpteen stories about short-term rentals;
- I would get regular tips on stories I should write;
- I would file an FOIA;

I certainly had no clue when we moved here that there is so much happening in South Haven. Nor did I ever expect being a newcomer to town that I would meet so many wonderful people. Or be made to feel like a part of the South Haven community.

Since this has turned into a sort of end-of-the-year summary of my life as the Beacon writer, I do have some goals – call them resolutions if you like – for 2026.

First, I'm going to make fewer mistakes and get more facts correct; I plan to spend more nights at home with Jane; I pledge to write less about STRs; and I resolve to attend fewer meetings.

Sure. As if any of that will happen!

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Sleeper hopes to have more time to travel after SH Council stint

James Windell

For the past eight years, George Sleeper's life revolved around the schedule of the South Haven City Council. When he leaves the council at the end of December 2025, he and his wife Margaret hope to do more traveling.

"With my daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren in Seattle and my son in Boston," Sleeper said in a recent interview, "we have plenty of places to go."

When he decided to run for the City Council in 2017, he was not only looking at ways to give back to the community, but he thought he would be retiring from the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant because it seemed certain it was closing down. Once he had committed to running for City Council and won, Palisades decided to keep going and so Sleeper was working fulltime at the nuclear power plant and learning the ropes as a city council member.

Serving as a City Council member since January 2018, he says that the experience has been highly enjoyable. Perhaps not for the reasons you might imagine though.

"It was a very worthwhile experience because I enjoyed meeting people, talking to people and learning," Sleeper says. "I enjoy learning and I learned a lot about how the city works and how the different boards and commissions are involved with how the city works."

There were several highlights of Sleeper's tenure on the City Council.

"I would say one of the highlights was the people I got to work with, both on the City Council and on other committees," he says. "There were many really good people and being on some good subcommittees I got to work with different people."

Sleeper has served on the Planning Commission, the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum, and the Board of Public Utilities. As a member of the Planning Commission, he says that he had the opportunity to be on the subcommittee that worked on a new zoning ordinance. That, he adds, "was very interesting work." With a background as an electrical engineer, he says that he has enjoyed being on the Board of Public Utilities and he indicates he would like to stay on that Board.

Along with the highlights, there were also low points for him as a council member. Being removed from the Planning Commission and replaced by another City Council member was a disappointment for him. "Since I had worked on the subcommittee to revise the zoning ordinance, I wanted to see that through," he says.

There have been other frustrations as well. "The STR ordinance was something I felt was frustrating because we had gone through it, but looking back I don't think we did a very good job. Perhaps we got involved in the drafting of the ordinance more than we should have."

Since he retired from Palisades, he comments that he has been trying to learn Spanish and to research his ancestry. While he and Margaret will be traveling more after he leaves the City Council, he thinks he is going to "hang out for a while and see how much free time I have." Although he adds that he might be open to another board or commission appointment "if the city needs me to do that."

Aa a 40-year resident of South Haven, his commitment to the city will be as strong as ever – even though he will no longer be on the City Council.

"One of the things I like about South Haven is that we have all sorts of people who help make our community better," he says. "The City does a lot for us, but it's our citizens who do so much to make our community what it is."

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Bronson recognizes four providers with 2025 Compassionate Provider of the Year awards

Susan Heinrich, MD

Sonya Datta-Sandhu, CNM

Katie Moratti, NP

Cara Herman, CRNA

Bronson Healthcare is proud to honor four outstanding providers with the 2025 Compassionate Physician/Advanced Practice Provider (APP) of the Year Award. This annual recognition celebrates clinicians who exemplify empathy and compassion in caring for patients and families.

This year's honorees include one physician and three APPs, nominated and chosen by their peers:

•Sonya Datta-Sandhu, CNM, Bronson Obstetrics, Gynecology & Midwifery Specialists in Kalamazoo & South Haven

•Susan Heinrich, MD, Bronson LakeView Family Care – Blue Star in South Haven

•Katie Moratti, NP, Bronson Vascular & Endovascular Surgery Specialists in Battle Creek

•Bronson Medical Staff provider, Cara Herman, CRNA, Kalamazoo Anesthesiology, PC

"Compassion in healthcare means more than understanding. It's about taking meaningful steps to ease the burden of those we serve," says Michelle Halley, MD, Bronson Pediatric Critical Care Specialists and chair of Bronson's provider wellness committee. "This year's honorees consistently go above and beyond to provide comfort and hope to patients and families during their most vulnerable moments. Their commitment to compassionate care is what makes Bronson truly exceptional, and I am deeply grateful to work alongside such dedicated professionals."

The Compassionate Physician and Advanced Practice Provider of the Year Awards are made possible through the generosity of donors to Bronson Health Foundation, including:

•Gretchen LaReau Memorial Fund at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation

•Bronson Battle Creek Hospital Community Partners

•Bernice DeHaan Memorial Donor Advised Fund

Area Church Services

PAW PAW

ALMENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
27503 CR 375
Pastor Dan Phillips
668-2811 • www.almenaumc.com
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
(Childcare Provided)
FRIDAY: AA- 8 p.m.
••••
COVEY HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
33566 28th Avenue
(corner of 28th & M-40)
269-628-2139 • www.coveyhill.org
Pastor Daniel Wilson
SUNDAY
Worship @10:45am
Nursery & Children's Church provided
Messages available on YouTube
••••
FAITH OF THE APOSTLES CURCH
34580 M-40 Highway
Elder David Harn
1 (269) 512-4586
SUNDAY
Christian Education - 10 a.m.
Wroship Service - 11:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY • Bible Study - 7 p.m.
••••
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
32464 Red Arrow
Pastor Horace M. "Buddy" Turner... 657-2090
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/buddy-turner2 or search: "Buddy Turner"
••••
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
120 Pine St, Paw Paw
Worship: 11am Sundays in person or online at - www.pawpawpres.com or www.youtube.com/@1st-prespawpaw
••••
NEW HOPE FAMILY
201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Mark Roberts
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY
Morning Worship - 10 a.m.
••••
PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.pawpaw.church
Oline worship services on Facebook & YourTube
••••
PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-7727
Pastor Dan Phillips
Sunday Service at 9:30 am
••••
RED ARROW MINISTRIES
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV
Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream worship
••••
ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpawpaw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 307, Paw Paw, MI 49079
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.
••••
ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
500 Paw Paw Street
Fr. Dave Pinto
657-4459
SATURDAY Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY MASSES - 9AM & 11AM
Holy days & Daily Masses Consult Bulletin
••••
TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
721 Pine Street
Pastor Phillip Phifer
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.
••••
TRUTH CHURCH
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpaw-paw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.
••••
IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy., Bilingual
Pastors Maggie and Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday: Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico | Prayer/ Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514
(269) 993-6727

LAWRENCE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org
for information of online videos

GOBLES

NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES
04077 M40 • 269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

MARCELLUS

ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. John Tran.
668-3312
SUNDAY - 9:45AM
••••
HARMONY CHAPEL
88067 C.R. 652 (In the SW corner of Porter Twp.)
Rev. Ron Packer
269-548-7348
Please join us as we continue to Worship in the Country
Since 1894
SUNDAY Service - 12:30 p.m.
For mor information or directions call:
Neal Ferguson: 269-624-6837
or
Ann Nesbitt: 269-624-6781

DECATUR

DECATUR BIBLE CHURCH
80797 M-51, Decatur • (269) 423-5111
Pastor Steven Pace
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study & Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/DecaturBibleChurch • http://www.decaturbible.org
••••
Decatur New Hope Community Church
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY • Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY • Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

LAWTON

DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6 p.m.
••••
IGLESIA PENTECOSTES
Eel Movimiento misionero Mundial, Inc.
Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071
••••
LAWTON EVANGELICAL CHURCH
425 S. Nursery Street, Lawton • 624-1524
Call if you need help in some way
www.lawtonevan.com
SUNDAY Worship Services - 10 a.m.
We offer Nursery and Children's Church
••••
NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH
502 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065
Pastor Adam Potgiesser
Sunday Worship 10am
www.nc2online.com • facebook.com/nc2online
(269) 299-2003
••••
ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com
or on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

MATTAWAN

Calvary Community Church
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240 • www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calvary-community.church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody's Closet, a free clothing ministry is open Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.••••
FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)
••••
MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263 • www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
SUNDAYS AT 10:25 A.M
••••
ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. John Tran
668-3312 • www.stjbparish.com
Sunday Mass times to 8:00 AM & 11:30 AM Saturday Vigil 4:00PM

DIRECTORY OF CHURCH SERVICES IS PROVIDED BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

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56556 Main Street
Mattawan • 668-3350

HIEMSTRA OPTICAL CO.
Michael Houser & staff
133 E. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-4511

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Lawton • 624-4411

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504 W. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-6347

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

ALMENA TOWNSHIP
SYNOPSIS
NOVEMBER 19, 2025

Almena Township Board meeting was held November 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
Attendance: Kelly Redmond, John Wagner, Mark Roman, Scott Rueff, Sandra Rickli, Joe Leduc. Absent: Tim Kloosterman

a. Motion passed to approve amended agenda
b. Motion passed to approve meeting minutes of October 15, 2025
c. Disbursements approved in the amount of $163,961.79
d. Commissioner and Sheriff's Department report
e. Public comment offered
f. Reports by officers presented
g. Motion passed to approve contribution to Kalamazoo County Hazardous Waste amended agreement
h. Motion to approve a back-up generator bid from M-40 Diesel
i. Public comment offered
j. Meeting adjourned 7:55pm

Sandra Rickli, Clerk, Almena Township

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Max Swank; Atty: Team J; 1st Pub: 1/1/2026; Atty File #: 524710F02; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 29, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Max Swank, a married man and Alexandria Swank, his wife via Loan Modification dated April 12, 2024
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): MidFirst Bank
Date of Mortgage: May 14, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: May 21, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $143,640.67
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Hartford, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: That part of the East half of the West half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 17, Town 3 South, Range 16 West, lying Southerly of the centerline of the Red Arrow Highway, except beginning at the intersection of the centerline of said Red Arrow Highway and the West line of the East half of the West half of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 17, thence Southerly on said line 200 feet, thence East 210 feet, thence North to the center of said road, thence Southwesterly along said centerline to beginning.
Common street address (if any): 66599 Red Arrow Hwy, Hartford, MI 49057-9725
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: January 1, 2026
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1581164

(01-01)(01-22)

-- County: Van Buren; Mtgr: John A. Gropp; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 12/25/2025; Atty File #: 25-015501; Insurer: FHLMC
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 22, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by John A. Gropp, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Top Flite Financial, Inc., Mortgagee, dated January 29, 2021 and recorded February 8, 2021 in Liber 1713, Page 540 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by PHH Asset Services LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Sixty-Four Thousand Eight Hundred Five and 72/100 Dollars ($64,805.72).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 22, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Bangor, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 29, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 16 WEST. ALSO THE SOUTH 90 FEET OF THE WEST 300 FEET OF THE NORTH 1/2 OF THE SOUTH 1/2 OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION.
41557 68th St, Bangor, Michigan 49013
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: December 25, 2025
File No. 25-015501
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(12-25)(01-15)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: PennyMac Loan Services, LLC v. Travis Schuster; Atty: Trott Law P.C. - Trott Law P.C.; 1st Pub: 12/18/2025; Atty File #: 504518L03; Insurer: (unknown)
Van Buren County Circuit Court Case No. 25-074638-CH
NOTICE OF JUDICIAL SALE

The property described below shall be sold at public auction, by an authorized sheriff/deputy sheriff or county clerk/deputy county clerk, to the highest bidder, at the Circuit Court for the County of Van Buren, on the 5th of February, 2026 at 1:00 pm, local time.
On said day at said time, the following described property shall be sold: real property situated in the Township of Porter, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and is particularly described as: That part of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 8, Town 4 South, Range 13 West, described as Beginning at a point on the North and South 1/4 line of said Section, which is South 00 degrees 55 minutes 10 seconds East, 600.00 feet from the center of said Section 8, said beginning point being North 00 degrees 55 minutes 10 seconds West, 2034.10 feet from the South 1/4 post of said Section; thence South 00 degrees 55 minutes 10 seconds East along said 1/4 line, 375.00 feet; thence North 89 degrees 52 minutes 57 seconds West parallel with said East and West 1/4 line, 550.00 feet; thence North 00 degrees 55 minutes 10 seconds West parallel with said North and South 1/4 line, 375.00 feet; thence South 89 degrees 52 minutes 57 seconds East parallel with said East and West 1/4 line, 550.00 feet to the point of beginning Tax Parcel ID: 80-16-008-014-10 More commonly known as: 78560 M 40 Lawton, MI 49065 This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of Notice: 12/18/2025 Trott Law, P.C.
1580064

(12-18)(01-22)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: James L Wellington; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 12/18/2025; Atty File #: 527183F01; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 15, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): James L. Willington a single man
Original Mortgagee: FINANCIAL FREEDOM SENIOR FUNDING CORPORATION , A SUBSIDIARY OFINDYMAC BANK, F.S.B.
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): GITSIT Solutions, LLC, not in its individual capacity but solely in its capacity as Separate Trustee of GV Trust 2025-1
Date of Mortgage: January 8, 2007
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 19, 2007
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $138,267.29
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Geneva, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the Southwest corner of the Northwest fractional 1/4 of Section 1, Town 1 South,
Range 16 West, According to the Government Survey thereof; thence North on the West Section
line, 6 rods; thence East 11 rods; thence South 6 rods to the East and West 1/4 line; thence West
on same to beginning.
Common street address (if any): 02045 County Road 681, Grand Junction, MI 49056-9587
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: December 18, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1579893

(12-18)(01-08)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Aleene Russ; Atty: KREIS ENDERLE - KALAMAZOO - KREIS ENDERLE - KALAMAZOO; 1st Pub: 12/18/2025; Atty File #: (N/A); Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE OF LIEN AGAINST CONDOMINIUM UNIT IN THE LIGHTHOUSE VILLAGE AT LIFESTYLES OF SOUTH HAVEN CONDOMINIUM NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the certain Lien Against Condominium Unit in the Lighthouse Village at Lifestyles of South Haven Condominium ("Lien") will be foreclosed by a sale of the premises (as defined below) at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the Circuit Court in Van Buren County, Michigan, starting promptly at January 22, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. The amount due on the Lien may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than ninety (90) days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the lien at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Lighthouse Village at Lifestyles of South Haven Condominium Association ("Association") recorded the aforementioned Lien, dated September 9, 2024, against the premises owned by Aleene Russ, a single woman ("Owner"), which address is 72177 Beacon Court, Unit 37, South Haven, Michigan 49090 (the "Premises"). The Premises is a Unit in the Lighthouse Village at Lifestyles of South Haven Condominium. The Lien was recorded on September 9, 2024, in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds, at Liber 1769, Page 818. As of December 18, 2025, the amount claimed to be due under the Lien is the sum of Seven Thousand One Hundred Forty and 00/100 Dollars ($7,140.00), including interest and attorney fees. This sum will increase as additional interest, costs, expenses, and attorney fees accrue under the Lien which are permitted under Michigan law. Under the power of sale contained in the Condominium Bylaws and under Section 108 of the Michigan Condominium Act, as amended, notice is hereby given that the Lien will be foreclosed by sale of the Premises at public sale to the highest bidder at the Van Buren County Courthouse, which address is 212 East Paw Paw Street, 2nd Floor, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079, and which is the place of the holding of the Circuit Court for Van Buren County, State of Michigan, on January 22, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. The Premises is situated in the Township of South Haven, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan and legally described as follows: Unit 37, Lighthouse Village at Lifestyles of South Haven Condominium, a Condominium according to the Master Deed recorded in Liber 1453 on Page 859 inclusive, and amendments thereto and designated as Van Buren County Condominium Subdivision Plan No. 102, together with rights in general common elements and limited common elements as set forth in said Master Deed and as described in Act 59 of Public Acts of 1978, as amended. Premises Address: 72177 Beacon Court, Unit 37, South Haven, Michigan 49090 Premises Tax ID: 80-17-171-037-00 If the Premises is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be six (6) months from the date of sale, unless the Premises is abandoned, in which case the redemption period may be shortened in accordance with Michigan law. If the Premises is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the Owner and any other person liable on the Lien will be held responsible to the person who buys the Premises at the foreclosure sale or to the Lien holder for damaging the Premises during the redemption period. Dated: December 18, 2025 LIEN HOLDER: LIGHTHOUSE VILLAGE AT LIFESTYLES OF SOUTH HAVEN CONDOMINIUM ASSOCIATION c/o LASR ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT ATTN: KATELYN SCOFIELD-STANFILL 764 LAGRANGE SOUTH HAVEN MI 49090 Attorneys for the Lighthouse Village at Lifestyles of South Haven Condominium Association: Kreis, Enderle, Hudgins & Borsos, P.C. By: Jeffrey D. Swenarton 750 Trade Centre Way, Suite 250 Portage, Michigan 4900

(12-18)(01-08)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Nancy E Reinhardt; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 14MI00682-5; Insurer: (unknown)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Nancy E. Reinhardt, single to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 26, 2006, and recorded on November 7, 2006, in Liber 1472, Page 464, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-22 by an Assignment of Mortgage dated May 04, 2012 and recorded May 14, 2012 in Liber 1567, Page 462, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty-Two and 53/100 ($149,862.53) including interest at the rate of 3.00000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Beginning on the North line of Section 36, Town 2 South, Range 13 West at a point 430.00 feet South 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds West of the Northeast corner of the Section; thence South 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds West on the Section line, 153 feet; thence South 01 degrees 10 minutes 20 seconds East parallel with the East Section line, 462.00 feet; thence North 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds East 153.00 feet; thence North 01 degrees 10 minutes 20 seconds West 462.00 feet to the place of beginning. Commonly known as: 22185 44TH AVE, MATTAWAN, MI 49071 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: December 11, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-22 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 14MI00682-5

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Terry M. Gordnier; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 526346F01; Insurer: (unkown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Terry M. Gordnier, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): GITSIT Solutions, LLC, not in its individual capacity but solely in its capacity as Separate Trustee of GV Trust 2025-1
Date of Mortgage: December 31, 2013
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 13, 2014
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $75,567.57
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the West Quarter Post of Section 22 Town 2 South Range 13 West; thence East on the East and West quarter line 163 feet; thence South 00 degrees 27 minutes 30 seconds West 209 feet; thence West 163 feet to the West Section line; thence North 00 degrees 27 minutes 30 seconds East on same to beginning.
Common street address (if any): 27939 38th Ave, Paw Paw, MI 49079-9429
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice:
December 11, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1579567

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: James Marble; Atty: Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates - Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates ; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: MI 25 6843; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT.

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale.
Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE INFORMATION:
Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by James Marble, a single man, whose address is 410 East Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079, as original Mortgagors, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Rocket Mortgage, LLC, being a mortgage dated February 6, 2024, and recorded on February 13, 2024 in Liber 1761 Page 885, Van Buren County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated November 25, 2025 and recorded on November 26, 2025 in Liber 1786 Page 619, Van Buren County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of EIGHTY-NINE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SIXTEEN AND 07/100 DOLLARS ($89,416.07). Said premises are situated in the Village of Paw Paw, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: LOT 6 AND THE WEST 20 FEET OF LOT 7, BLOCK 29, THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER E OF DEEDS, PAGE 566, VAN BUREN COUNTY.
Street Address: 410 East Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE.
Dated: December 11, 2025
For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490), Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602. Telephone: (312) 541-9710 File No.: MI 25 6843

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: 7338 HARDISTY LLC; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUT SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS - ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 25-303401; Insurer: (unknown)
ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT.
ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112 Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on January 08, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name of the mortgagor: Adam Wright, as Manager of 7338 Hardisty LLC. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by 7338 HARDISTY LLC, to INVESTOR MORTGAGE FINANCE LLC, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated June 30, 2022, and

Continues on page 9

Sheriff's office helps families at Christmas Giving event

The Van Buren County Sheriff's Office recently held its annual Christmas Giving event at the South Haven Meijer store. The Sheriff's Office received funding and support from the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Reserve Division, Meijer stores and anonymous donors. Families were given the opportunity to shop for essential items and holiday gifts.

Photos courtesy/Van Buren County Sheriff's Office

Military service members appreciative of "Operation Holiday Cheer"

PAW PAW - Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc., (BSMA) recently hosted its 19th annual Support the Troops "Operation Holiday Cheer" (OHC) packing event.

Laura De Roo, BSMA local chapter founder and media representative, said, "So, whether you donated items, time, help with the packing or donated funds to help us get it shipped, thank you!"

De Roo said, "This year our chapter faced a good many new obstacles, making what we do each year to support our deployed service members, much more difficult. The tariffs for shipping overseas were not supposed to affect shipping care pages and mail to our overseas service members. The tariffs did not affect our efforts directly, but they influenced the United States Postal Service to make and implement changes in the process that we have been doing for19 years. Each box shipped had to have every - single - item in the box listed by name (including brand), weight, and monetary value. When we normally ship over 100 boxes and each custom form required so much time and effort, we had to adjust our procedures. For the first time we accepted stateside address along with our deployed address for OHC. Those boxes did not have as many hoops to go through."

She continued, "With a lot of hard work and lessons learned, we did manage to send 140 boxes, 52 boxes to our deployed and 88 boxes to stateside service members at a grand total of $4.033.58 for shipping."

De Roo said, "We are starting to receive thank you messages back from those who have received our boxes and as so many from the community helped get the boxes sent. We thought you'd enjoy hearing what they are saying":

De Roo said one young sailor received his box just in time to pack his duffle bag full of items from his box prior to shipping out. "He is planning on sharing them. He was very excited about all the food and especially the tuna salad and crackers! The thrill of the sauce packets was huge!"

Another, a young woman was so excited to receive her boxes. "She is repacking them to share with new airmen that are arriving from tech school. She said they usually don't come with much. She was making copies of our Blue Star Letter to share with each one, so they would know where the items came from," said De Roo.

Another said, "I just received one of your boxes. Thank you, guys, so much. I will be sharing with my unit. I have gotten a number of these over the years, and it does help knowing that there are people out there who care. The things in the packages that are sent are some things you might (not) think (much) about, but they remind me of home."

De Roo concluded, "Thank you for helping us spread Holiday Cheer among our service members at home and abroad! We couldn't do it without you!!"

For more information on Blue Star Mothers, go to: www.bluestarmothers.org or visit the "Blue Star Mothers of Southwest Michigan Chapter 179" Facebook page.

Brennan named Student of Month

The Paw Paw Kiwanis Club has named Truman Brennan as its December Student of the Month. Teacher Paul DeWitt said of Brennan, "Truman is a student who has an outstanding attitude, work ethic, and leads by example. Truman consistently demonstrates respect, kindness and responsibility in his various activities. He is dedicated to his academic studies by taking challenging courses and encourages those around him making him a role model for his peers. This year he has taken on a new role by giving back his time during RTI to help tutor students in math. Students in those classes look forward to his help because of the way he treats them with respect. He is a great example of how students can learn from each other and help build a learning community." Basketball is his passion, and he hopes to be able to continue playing wherever he goes to further his education. Shown in photo from left, Teacher Paul DeWitt, Kiwanian member Patrick Gorenchan, student Truman Brennan, and Brennan's parents, Mindy and Patrick Brennan.

Photo courtesy/Paw Paw Kiwanis Club

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

Continues from page 8

recorded on July 12, 2022, in Liber 1740 Page 708 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds. Said mortgage was assigned by said Mortgagee through mesne assignments to U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF THE LB-TIKI SERIES VI TRUST, as documented by an assignment of mortgage dated September 3, 2025, and recorded on October 31, 2025, in Liber 1785 Page 578 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $624,549.83. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on January 08, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. Said premises are located in the city of GOBLES in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PINE GROVE, COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, AND STATE OF MICHIGAN: PART OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 14, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, DESCRIBED AS BEGINNING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 14; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 45 SECONDS EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH PARALLEL WITH THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF SECTION 14; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 45 SECONDS WEST, ALONG SAID NORTH LINE, 660.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.

Property Address: 8221 26TH ST. GOBLES MI, 49055 Tax ID No. 80-15-014-011-02 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the Mortgage sale or to the Mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF THE LB-TIKI SERIES VI TRUST, Mortgagee/Assignee December 11th, 2025 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/ Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com

(12-11)(01-01)

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PUBLIC NOTICE
VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
DDA
(DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village of Mattawan DDA will accept letters of interest for one new DDA Board Member.
All interested persons should send a letter of interest along with your qualifications and reason for wanting to serve on the DDA to Village Hall or by e-mail.

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071

(269) 668-2128
offices@mattawanmi.com

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
2026 SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Regular Meetings of the Mattawan Village Council shall occur on the dates listed below at the Village Hall, 24221 Front Avenue, Mattawan, MI 49071, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The Village telephone number is 269-668-2128.

JANUARY 12	JANUARY 26
FEBRUARY 9	FEBRUARY 23
MARCH 9	MARCH 23
APRIL 13	APRIL 27
MAY 11	*MAY 26
JUNE 8	JUNE 22
JULY 13	JULY 27
AUGUST 10	AUGUST 24
SEPTEMBER 14	SEPTEMBER 28
OCTOBER 12	OCTOBER 26
NOVEMBER 9	NOVEMBER 23
DECEMBER 14	DECEMBER 28

***DUE TO HOLIDAY, MEETING IS TUESDAY**

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
2026 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Regular Meetings of the Mattawan Village Planning Commission shall occur on the dates listed below at the Village Hall, 24221 Front Avenue, Mattawan, MI 49071, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The Village telephone number is 269-668-2128.

FEBRUARY 18
MAY 20
AUGUST 19
NOVEMBER 18

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
2026 SCHEDULE OF DDA MEETINGS

The Regular Meetings of the Mattawan DDA shall occur on the dates listed below at the Village Hall, 24221 Front Avenue, Mattawan, MI 49071, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The Village telephone number is 269-668-2128.

JANUARY 20
FEBRUARY 17
MARCH 17
APRIL 21
MAY 19
JUNE 16
JULY 21
AUGUST 18
SEPTEMBER 15
OCTOBER 20
NOVEMBER 17
DECEMBER 15

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